

Subject: Good News from LADBS!

From: "Bud Ovrom" <LADBS.Newsletter@lacity.org>

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To: "duckworth.donald@gmail.com" <duckworth.donald@gmail.com>



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**Special Points of
Interest**

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Message from the General Manager



Monthly Statistics

We are now four months into the fiscal year and the beat goes on! Plan check revenue, our best indicator of future construction, is up 8% for the month and up 20% for the year over last year at this time. Total revenues for the Department are up 12% over last year.

New construction continues to be led by residential apartment construction. We had 255 housing starts in October and our year-to-date total is now at 1,706 units, up 14% over this time last year.

Total new construction is still slightly behind last year's pace. We had \$204.3 million in new construction started in October, up 21% compared to last October. But, because the first two months of this year were so slow, our year-to-date total is now at \$841.1 million, down 3% from last year at this time.

In the normal cycle of the development process, plan check precedes construction. Because our plan check numbers are higher than last year, we are cautiously optimistic that this fiscal year's new construction will still end up higher than the \$3.3 billion we hit last year.

**LADBS
Construction
Service Centers**



Downtown

201 N. Figueroa
Street
Los Angeles, CA
90012
(Figueroa Plaza)

**West Los
Angeles**

1828 Sawtelle
Blvd.
2nd Floor
Los Angeles, CA
90025

South LA

8475 S. Vermont
Ave.
2nd Floor
Los Angeles, CA
90044

Van Nuys

6262 Van Nuys
Blvd.
2nd Floor, Room
251
Los Angeles, CA
91401

San Pedro

638 S. Beacon
Street
Room 276
San Pedro, CA
90731

Counter Hours:

Monday, Tuesday,
Thursday, Friday:
7:30 am - 4:30 pm
Wednesday: 9:00
am - 4:30 pm
* San Pedro &
South LA offices
are closed
between noon -
1:00 pm daily

For Information
you call:
3-1-1 (Inside LA
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(213) 473-3231
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For perspective, our low point in this Administration was FY08-09 at \$2.5 billion (down from \$5.36 billion in FY06-07). Although the negative news about the weak overall economy overshadows it, the fact is new construction in LA went up 20% in FY09-10 to \$3.0 billion and up another 10% in FY10-11 to \$3.3 billion.

Automated Parking



Last month the UCLA Ziman Center for Real Estate hosted a workshop on automated parking as a possible innovative solution for high density parking.

Although LA has approved 2 and 3 car 'lifts' for many years, fully automated systems (as shown above) had not yet achieved our high level of safety standards until recently.

This month's newsletter features a story on the coming of age of automated parking in Los Angeles.

The full proceedings of the Ziman workshop can be found on their webpage at <http://www.anderson.ucla.edu/x37321.xml>.

Meet Gio Dacumos

One of my most pleasant surprises in coming to LADBS was to find a very talented corps of middle managers. In any organization it is usually possible to create a top tier of executive managers. But, the real strength of an organization often depends on the next level of supervisors and senior managers.

LADBS is very fortunate to have some truly outstanding senior managers. In this newsletter we are profiling one of the very best, Gio Dacumos, our Director of Systems.

Automated Parking Comes to Los Angeles



The City recently approved two automated parking structures – a 15-car fully automated lift in the Valley and a 17-car facility in Chinatown.

Although these two units are small, they are still very significant because they are the first of a new generation of automated parking structures to be constructed in Los Angeles.

A 708-car complex for a proposed 283-unit apartment project in Century City is currently going through the entitlement process. The EIR is being done with and without automated parking. The developer's preference is automated.

Although automated parking is now fairly common in Asia and Europe, it has been slower to catch-on, and to get approved by regulatory agencies, in the United States, particularly in Los Angeles.

By working closely with the Fire and Building and Safety departments, the various manufacturers of different automated technologies are now addressing the structural and life safety concerns of the City.



Under the right circumstances for design and economic consideration, an automated parking structure can have many advantages for developers – less land consumed, less space constructed, more environmentally sensitive, safer, greater handicap accessibility and less building density/visual bulk, just to name a few.

For the City, the bottom line of course, is safety! On a case by case review, the City will be looking at the fire-life safety of the overall building (exiting, fire sprinklers, fire rated partitions, fire rating), access for fire suppression, method of water application, venting of smoke and heat, safety of fire fighters while fighting a fire and early warning notification system.

Although the City has studied a variety of systems (tower crane, rack and rail and automated guided vehicles), we have not, and will not, give a blanket endorsement to any specific technologies. There is never likely to ever be a 'one size fits all' approach. Instead, we are open-minded about looking at different solutions for different situations.

Most importantly, we do believe that by working together we can find win-win designs and that automated parking now has the potential to be a 'game changer' for many future projects in the City of Los Angeles.



BYD Opens North American

Headquarters



The global, high-tech green company, BYD, opened its doors on October 24th in Downtown Los Angeles' Figueroa Corridor (CD 9, Perry) after a major rehabilitation of the 34,000 sf building for their grand opening celebration.

The event was held in their building's showroom and was attended by the Mayor of Los Angeles Antonio Villaraigosa and BYD Chairman Chuanfu Wang (shown above), Council District 9-Councilwoman Jan Perry, Shenzhen Mayor Xu Qin and a standing room only crowd.

BYD, which stands for "Build Your Dreams," is headquartered in the city of Shenzhen, China. Founded in 1995 by Chuanfu Wang with only 20 employees, it currently employs over 200,000 worldwide and is rapidly expanding.

The company focuses in green and environmentally friendly products such as electric and hybrid passenger vehicles, electric buses, solar power systems, environmentally friendly batteries and mobile phone components. BYD is 50 percent US owned with Warren Buffett being one of the priority investors in the company.

BYD is also bringing the dreams to Los Angeles. With the new North American headquarters, they will employ 150 green-collar engineering and management positions and the goal for the North American headquarters is to develop similar versions of their most popular vehicles currently selling in China for the US consumer market.

BYD's green technology investment will generate hundreds of additional

jobs for Los Angeles and the southern California Region.

TOMS Shoes



The City is welcoming a new shoe company, TOMS Shoes. They are relocating their headquarters, and workforce of approximately 250 employees, from Santa Monica to West L.A. (CD 11, Rosendahl). The company, which was founded in 2006, makes shoes similar to the alpargata style shoe in Argentina.

TOMS Shoes has gone from a business started in an apartment to a global company selling shoes in 54 countries and growing. The projected and actual growth of TOMS Shoes necessitated new headquarters. They started out in a 30,000 sf space that did not meet their needs which quickly led them to their current tenant improvement project site; a 70,000 sf warehouse with parking and outdoor spaces.

The architect and engineer of the new headquarters is Shimoda Design Group. The main focus of the headquarters' design is to have a great workspace where all of the energy can flow freely, not a place where it seems to be 'designed.' To keep the building consistent with the goals of TOMS Shoes, the new headquarters is going to have a wellness room for yoga, a dog run, a bandstand for casual jam sessions, an edible garden, portable tents for outdoor meetings and a vernacular ocean side planting.

LADBS' Development Services Case Management Office helped in guiding the company through the complex permitting process very quickly and efficiently. Inspectors from the Construction Inspection Partnership Program have also made a smooth transition from permit issuance to inspection possible as well.

The contractor for the project is Corporate Contractors. Construction started on the tenant improvement space in the middle of October 2011 and is projected to be completed by the end of January 2012.

Giovani Dacumos

Director of Systems



Mr Dacumos is an innovator, motivator and doer. The Department of Building and Safety (LADBS) is fortunate to have him as the Director of Systems leading our Information Technology (IT) operations and masterminding the Department's IT strategic plans.

According to GM Bud Ovrom, "leveraging technology is the key to maximizing our resources. Gio and his team are great at keeping our aging systems afloat and strategizing on how to implement new technology solutions on a tight budget with reduced staff. This is especially important in supporting Mayor Villaraigosa's emphasis on development reform".

Mr. Dacumos has a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Engineering and a Masters degree in Computer Science. His professional certifications and licenses include Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer, Cisco Certified Network Professional, Certified Novell Engineer, Red Hat Certified Engineer, Sun Certified Java Developer, and ITIL Practitioner.

Prior to working for LADBS, Mr. Dacumos was a Senior Systems Analyst at the Bureau of Engineering, Department of Public Works (BOE) responsible for the Infrastructure, Geographical Information System, and the Technical Services Sections. He also held positions at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (Data Analyst/Senior Programmer) and Microsoft (Senior Programmer Analyst).

As a Director of Systems and Chief of LADBS' Management Information Systems Division (MISD), Mr. Dacumos is responsible for formulating and implementing the Department's IT strategic plan, related policies, and budget. MISD supports information technology related services for more than 770 employees, countless external customers, over 30 enterprise-wide applications, and over 3,000 computer devices. MISD has approximately 40 staff members that are dedicated to the design, implementation, and maintenance of all IT functions in the Department.

Mr. Dacumos lives and breathes technology: He spends hundreds of hours of his own time keeping abreast of the latest technology and working with others to improve our/their operations. Many managers and IT staff in other agencies consider him as the 'go to' person to vet ideas related to maximizing the use of certain software applications, data, and hardware. He has forged many valuable relationships that work to our mutual benefit in getting the job done efficiently and cost effectively.

Our Mission Statement

The mission of the Department of Building and Safety is to protect the lives and safety of the residents and visitors of the City of Los Angeles and enhance the quality of life, housing, economic prosperity, and job creation. This is accomplished through advising, guiding, and assisting customers to achieve compliance with the Building, Zoning, Plumbing, Mechanical, Electrical, Disabled Access, Energy, and Green Codes; and local and State laws, through a timely, ethical, cooperative, and transparent process for the facilitation of construction and maintenance of commercial, industrial, and residential buildings throughout the City.

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LADBS Newsletter Editors: David Lara & Celeste Morris

This message was sent to duckworth.donald@gmail.com by:

City of Los Angeles
Department of Building & Safety
201 N. Figueroa Street, Suite 1000
Los Angeles, CA 90012
(213) 482-6800

